GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:7925
ANSWERED ON:17.05.2000
OUSTEES OF JADUGUDA MINING AREA
M. JAGANNATH

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some tribals of Jaduguda uranium mining area has approached the Government to rehabilitate and resettle them in a safe area, far away from mining site;

(b) if so, the decision taken by the Government in the matter; and

(c) the time by which the rehabilitation work is likely to commence?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY

(SMT. VASUNDHARA RAJE)

(a), An organisation titled the `Jharkhandis Organisation

(b) & (c) Against Radiation` (JOAR) has recently submitted arepresentation to Prime Minister making a number ofdemands in the context of (alleged) adverse impact of the operations of the Uranium Corporation of India Ltd. (UCIL), a central public sector undertaking of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), at Jaduguda in theEast Singhbhum District of Bihar. Apart from allegingthat the impact of the uranium mining operations (low- level radiation) is hazardous to the environment, health, safety and socio-economy of the Jaduguda area, demands have also been made on issues like the constitution of a multi-disciplinary team from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi to study the abovementioned (alleged) impact, evacution of villages around the existing tailing ponds/dams of UCIL to safer places and theirresettlement, establishment of a medical centre in or around Jaduguda to treat low level radiation related diseases, stoppage of (alleged) `import` of radio-active waste and radio-medical waste into Jaduguda for (alleged) dumping/storage and autonomy of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB).

UCIL operates three uranium mines at Jaduguda, Bhatin andNarwapahar respectively and a uranium-processing mill at Jaduguda. Since UCIL`s inception, the radiation levels inand around its mines and plants have been continuously monitored by the Health Physics Unit of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), a constituent unit of the DAE. The Health Physics Unit stationed a Jaduguda consists of qualified specialists in the relevant field.

The radiation levels in and around Jaduguda on account of releases from the mines/plants of UCIL are well within thelimit prescribed in this behalf by the AERB which are, inturn, based on the recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection.

Surveys conducted in the recent past by teams of medical doctors and other specialists, including doctors from the Tata Main Hospital, Jamshedpur and Health Department ofthe Government of Bihar and health physicists and medicalofficers from BARC have also established that the specific cases of diseases examined by the teams have no relation to radiation. Recent radiation survey of the area around Jaduguda has also reconfirmed that the operations of UCIL have not resulted in any increase in the backgound radiation levels beyond those prescribed by the AERB.

About 51 acres of private land were acquired by UCIL in the recent past, through the local District administration, for construction of its third stage tailing pond. Full compensation for the land so acquired has been paid by UCIL. Alternate land has been provided by the District administration for housing of the families whose lands/houses were acquired. This land has been leveled by UCILwhich has also provided drinking water tube wells there. Additional financial assistance (over and above due compensation for acquisition) has also been committed by UCIL to eachaffected family for construction of dwelling houses. Finally, 51 persons from 46 families whose lands and houses were acquired and 10 persons from 10 families from which only lands were acquired have been provided employment in UCIL. Thus, all necessary steps have been taken by UCIL, in consultation with the local District administration,for resettlement of the families whose lands/houses were acquired for construction of the third stage tailing pond. There is, however, no need for resettlement of these families at any other far away location in view of the reasons detailed above.